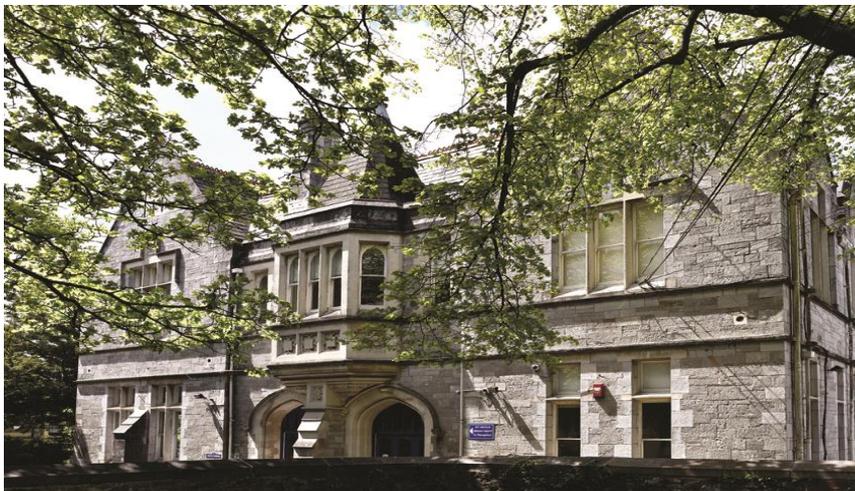


Curriculum and Progression Overview

Psychology

Plymouth High School for Girls



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Curriculum

Psychology is fundamentally about the students, their friends and family and the people they will meet in the future. Understanding others is fundamental in life, and in that respect, we are all natural Psychologists as we seek to explain our own and others behaviour in everything we do. Psychology A-level introduces a range of research methods that allow for objective, carefully balanced investigations of the reasons underlying behaviour. It removes many of the myths surrounding the subject and brings scientific rigour to the now complex understandings of human behaviour and emotion.

Intent

Psychology A-level at PHSG is delivered with research methods at its heart. The scientific forms of measurement and investigation of behaviour run concurrently through all of the different topics set out in the AQA A syllabus. Independent research methods lessons are carried out biweekly so that students can continue to apply the huge range of new concepts that they acquire in the first few weeks of teaching. An important assessment objective in the A-level is discussion and evaluation (A03) and unlike many of the other science A-levels all research and theory is critiqued as the students progress through each topic. This critical thinking is not only important within the subject but essential to life after psychology. This critical thinking is central to A-level Psychology right from the outset at PHSG. At all stages, the use of collaborative learning encourages students to reason logically and creatively through discussion, ideas and concepts. Misconceptions and wrong answers are an opportunity to improve and deepen understanding of computational concepts, through use of effective questioning and discussion. Psychology A-level aims to:

- To develop a positive attitude to psychology as an interesting and exciting subject in which all students gain success and enjoyment
- To develop psychological understanding through systematic direct teaching of appropriate learning objectives
- To develop an ability in students to express themselves fluently, to talk about the subject with confidence, using correct psychological terminology and vocabulary
- To develop and make connections across topics in Psychology.
- To develop the ability to think clearly and logically with independence of thought and flexibility of mind
- To develop psychological knowledge and a quick recall of basic facts.

Implementation

The AQA scheme of work is followed through five topics in year 1 so that the linear AS can be taken by students if need be. The course begins with the Memory module looking at memory experiments in detail with a specific application of research methods to these classic studies. Content is delivered via a range of methods including presentation, group work and practical research methods experiments. Special early focus is made on the written skills needed within the AS assessment looking at fully elaborated A03 writing, less is more and big picture answers using living graphs and exemplar material. The social psychology section follows on in this vein, focusing on the classic studies of conformity, obedience and social change. Heavy criticism is made of the research methods within them that undermine their perhaps overly renowned status. Attachment is the third topic covered including a sensitive look at attachment types and the consequences for future relationships from poor early experience. Topics in this area are obviously difficult to research practically but the topic is reinforced by a visit to the baby lab at the Plymouth University open day each year to look at contemporary methods of research on children. Psychopathology and the approaches in psychology are taught concurrently because of the similarity in content. Careful planning for the sensitive nature of the mental health topics are made because of students with specific needs. At A2 the content heavy topics of issues and debates, relationships, forensic psychology, biopsychology and schizophrenia all follow on in the same vein, with applied research and intriguing material at the heart of delivery. Students build on their written skills working on longer 16 mark answers with a focus on A03 and continue to hone their exam skills in preparation for the mock exams in April.

Impact

In Psychology, as in other curricular areas, assessment forms an integral part of learning and teaching. It is the gathering of evidence of both attainment and progression for the purpose of informing future planning, teaching and reporting. End of topic assessments reinforce and assess skills to allow all to understand how to improve in their learning. Planning is reflexive to allow for the needs of students and benefitted by the following strategies:

- To share learning objectives and success criteria clearly with students
- To assess understanding through skilful questioning within lessons
- To give students clear and regular feedback in both verbal and written form

- To assist learners and teachers to identify the next steps in the learning process which will ensure progression
- To engage in the process of self and peer assessment

At the end of each year we discuss what went well with the SOL and what needs to be improved and act upon them.

3.) Feedback and assessment systems:

Psychology

Name: _____

Assessment: _____

Mark: /

Target:

Feedback Sheet

*e.g where questions states 'discuss 2 ways' and only answers one

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CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW: KS 5 PSYCHOLOGY

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
KEY STAGE 5- Exam Board AQA A						
Year 12	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> Memory</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> End of topic test: exam conditions: Memory past paper</p>	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> Social</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> End of topic test: exam conditions: Social past paper</p>	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> Attachment</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> End of topic test: exam conditions: Attachment past paper</p>	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> Approaches/Psychopathology</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> End of topic test: exam conditions: Memory past paper</p>	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> Biopsychology/Research Methods</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> End of topic test: exam conditions: Biopsychology/Research Methods</p>	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> Forensics</p> <p><i>MOCK EXAM (OR Paper 1/2 mock exam</i></p>
Year 13	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> Schizophrenia</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> Jan: Paper 1 A level mock exam November: End of topic test: exam conditions: <i>Issues and debates</i></p>	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> Relationships</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> End of topic test: exam conditions: <i>Relationships</i></p>	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> Biopsychology</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> Mock exams</p>	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> Issues and debates</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> End of topic test: exam conditions: <i>Issues and debates</i></p>	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> Issues and debates</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> End of topic test: exam conditions: <i>Issues and debates</i> <i>Revision</i></p>	AL EXAMS

Psychology knowledge and skills progression

By end year 12 the students will

Know about

- Explanations and research investigating attachment
- Explanations and research investigating memory including eyewitness testimony
- Explanations and research investigating social influence including conformity, obedience minority influence and social change.
- The approaches in psychology including biopsychology
- Explanations for phobias, depression and OCD on the basis of the behavioural, cognitive and biological approach respectively.

Be able to:

- Analyse and design experiments
- Write hypotheses
- Analyse results with appropriate measures of central tendency
- Pick and justify an appropriate sampling technique
- Carry out a Sign test to analyse data

By end year 13 the students will

Know about:

- Explanations and research investigating forensic psychology
- Explanations and research investigating relationships
- Explanations and research investigating schizophrenia
- Issues and debates in psychology including free will and determinism, reductionism, ethical issues, culture and gender bias
- Further topics in biopsychology

Be able to:

- Establish which level of measurement is being used on new experiments
- Choose an appropriate statistical test to apply to a new experiment
- Find the appropriate critical value for the chosen test and establish whether the result is significant
- Distinguish between type I and type II errors.